DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 319 708 SP 032 322

AUTHOR Hughes, Andrew S.
TITLE Success for Every Child: The Teachers We Need for the 1990s and Beyond.
PUB DATE Jan 90
NOTE 34p.; Paper presented at the meetings of the Canadian Association of School Administrators (Halifax, Nova Scotia, January 28-31, 1990).
PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Reports - Descriptive (141)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Citizenship Responsibility; Curriculum Development; *Economic Factors; Foreign Countries; Futures (of Society); Government Role; *Politics of Education; Preservice Teacher Education; Secondary Education; *Teacher Effectiveness; Teacher Role; *Teacher Shortage

ABSTRACT

In addressing the future of schools and the qualities of good teachers for these schools, this paper first considers the social context for which the schools will be preparing students. A discussion of the elements within this context includes analyses of future economic factors, the need for enlightened citizens, and the educational context which includes both political and demographic factors. Consideration of the demographic factors brings up the point of the incipient teacher shortage in Canada and a discussion of what schools of education can and should or should not do in training future teachers. Dismissing the possibility of flooding the schools with inferior, hastily trained teachers, the point is made that educational technology opens possibilities for an innovative but smaller teaching force to educate and motivate students. The availability of excellent educational television hardware is pointed out as one means for supporting and enhancing the teacher's work. (JD)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED319708

Success for Every Child: The Teachers We Need for the 1990s and Beyond

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
☒ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

Andrew S. Hughes
Faculty of Education
University of New Brunswick
Fredericton, N.B. CANADA

(A paper prepared for the meetings of the Canadian Association of School Administrators, Halifax, Nova Scotia, January 28-31, 1990)

When I joined the ranks of the teaching profession in the 1960s there was a joke circulating among those responsible for doing the hiring. Basically, the joke was that all new recruits to the profession had to be subjected to an extremely rigorous screening process. This process was referred to as the "breath test" and the criterion of success was very explicit: If he's breathing, hire him! That expression implied a response to the question of what kinds of teachers were needed. In general, society subscribed to the belief that any teacher was better than no teacher at all. They were heady days in which graduates of the teacher education institutions accorded each other status on the basis of the number of job offers that they had received. Many schools were staffed by a principal who had but one or two years of experience and a corps of teachers typically comprised of beginners. The average age of the teaching force in many schools was less than twenty-five. For the more thoughtful, there seemed to be an air of the blind leading the blind, but most were gassed up and rearing to go.

SP 032 322

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
A.S. Hughes
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

When George Radwanski completed his report for the Ontario government in 1988 on the relevance of education in Ontario he claimed that the system was "out of gas." No doubt, he would make the same claim for the country as a whole. His report is contentious but, for the most part, ignored. Nevertheless, his observations, if not all of his recommendations, are astute. If his views are to be given any credence at all one has got to wonder what it is about the circumstances of the educational enterprise as we confront the 1990s and the 21st Century that make it so different from those of the 50s and 60s. What is it about the era of the Radwanski Report[1] that makes it so different from that of the Hall-Dennis Report[2] and the Worth Report[3], from **Living and Learning**, and **A Choice of Futures?**

One thing that should certainly not be different is the recognition of the key role of teachers. Studies find it difficult to show definitively that formal schooling contributes much to future success or to satisfaction with life in general and it is often concluded that "the broad effects of 'general' education are at least obscure and may be absent"[4] but, inevitably, it is shown that adults are able to look back and recall some individual teacher who, through personal dedication and compassion, has had a positive effect on his or her life. Many also recall teachers who have had a negative effect.[5] However, if we glance back through the educational policy issues that garnered our attention in Canada during the 80s we find

scarcely even tacit recognition of the place of teachers. In all our provinces there was a fascination with such matters as high school graduation requirements, core curricula, the balance of required and elective courses, the length of the school day and its configuration, the reintroduction in one guise or another of provincially sponsored examinations. These are what Radwanski would consider ". . . a succession of improvisations, half-measures and compromises" that have led to the ". . . drift, uncertainty and proliferation of piece-meal changes that are among the greatest weaknesses of our current system."[6] In the United States, similar interests have resulted in over one thousand pieces of legislation since 1983, most of them seeking to give greater specification and direction to the nature of the school curriculum. In Canada there has not been the same fascination with legislation but the trends have been similar. The interest has been in form and format, on rules, procedures, standards, monitoring and evaluation.

All of this activity proceeds on the assumption that it will positively influence what goes on in the name of schooling and no doubt it will. But all in all it shows little appreciation for what it is like behind the classroom door, for what happens when the bell rings. For it is at this stage that teachers and children begin to breathe life into the inert policies, the sterile rules and regulations.

Over the course of the last generation we have not really paid too much attention to the central and critical role played

by teachers. True, we do know that teachers do play a critical role. We know that they mould, shape, fashion, interpret, translate, ignore, acknowledge and/or disregard the various regulations designed to facilitate their work. We certainly pay lip-service to the proposition that teachers make a difference but we find it difficult to explore systematically some of its more obvious implications. We struggle both personally and professionally with the proposition that not all teachers make an equal difference; that some teachers make no difference; that, in some cases, the difference that they do make may well be worse than no difference at all. And yet these are the crucial propositions whose implications must be investigated if we recognize the teacher as the key element in the enterprise. And so, as we look to the 90s and beyond we have got to ask, what sort of person do we wish to attract to the profession? How can they be best educated and trained for the task? How can we ensure that the reward structure of the profession will be such that we will retain and advance the best? These are important questions of social and educational policy. Our responses to them will be shaped by the sort of future we want, as well as by the circumstances in which we now find ourselves; that is, the social context in which we seek answers. So let me briefly outline what I see as the important elements of the context in which we are now working.

The Economic Context

The relationship between education and the economy tends not to be clear when the economy is capable of absorbing all of its members into the workforce and it is even less so when uneducated people are capable of achieving considerable economic success, as indeed they have been able to do throughout much of Canada's history. But changing labour market requirements now mean that that sort of success is going to be increasingly difficult. "The career ladder has been truncated, and young people who start at the bottom with inadequate education and few skills will at best stay at the bottom in low-paid, dead-end jobs."[7] Furthermore, since capital and technology can now be deployed anywhere in the world, the key variable in determining where it will be deployed is rapidly becoming the quality of the workforce -- that is, the level of knowledge, skills, adaptability, ingenuity and motivation possessed by the people in any given society."[8] The Economic Council of Canada believes that education is becoming a cornerstone in our future economic development. It says, "the ability to learn will be the premium skill of the future."[9]

This is not to argue that the system needs to become vocationally oriented in any narrow sense of the word. However, we do need to recognize the critical importance of a job, of productive work, as one of the critical mechanisms through which a society allows its members to achieve a basic level of human dignity. Can anyone who has witnessed, through the media, the public displays of anguish accompanying the announcements of the

closures of the fish plants in Fogo Island and Canso and Shippagan during the past weeks doubt the importance of having a job? A good education will not ensure any particular individual in the society of appropriate employment but a well educated populace will ensure that Canada can compete effectively in the new knowledge-intensive global economy and will, thereby, have a demand for a workforce. As educators, we must recognize excellence in educating our workforce as an important strategic weapon in contributing to our collective sense of self-esteem. The world of business is not looking to the education system for specific job training. Business knows all too well that specific training becomes out of date quickly. As E. R. Dobell, President of the Institute for Research on Public Policy has pointed out: "It is simply not possible to predict what kinds of skills will be needed in the workforce even five years from now. Consequently a worker with mechanical training in specific skills will be in a far less advantageous position than one who has learned how to study, think independently and learn quickly."[10]

The Social Context

Just as the world economy is becoming increasingly knowledge intensive so the issues confronting Canada's citizens are becoming increasingly complex. The quality of the decisions that we will make on important policy issues facing us will depend, in large measure, upon our capacity to grasp their implications. Whether it be Free Trade, Meech Lake, the threat to the world

ecosystem, abortion or aids, the invasion of Panama, or the disruption of the world balance of power with the disintegration of the Soviet Block, an informed population is essential if Canada is to be both wise and gentle, protective of majority interests and respectful of minority rights. In his recent report, Radwanski puts it like this.

> When people lack the knowledge to understand difficult but important policy issues, it becomes tempting for them either to become indifferent to the political process or to follow the lead of people they find persuasive. But the workings of a liberal democracy can be well served neither by having an elite of the educated make all the decisions amid the apathy of the uninformed masses, nor by having great numbers of the uninformed steer the direction of society by the whim or emotion of the moment at the behest of various demagogues.[11]

The current surveys showing the general ignorance of the basic facts of the Meech Lake proposals points to the issue.

The Educational Context

There are two important aspects of the educational context in which we find ourselves today. One is the political and the other is the demographic. Let me talk briefly at the political dimension of the educational context and then I will go on to look at the demographic context in somewhat greater detail.

The politics of Education. In many ways the most salient feature of education in Canada during the 80s was the interest of political ministers in concentrating educational decisions in their own hands. The signs were present at the start of the decade and the process has proceeded apace.[12] Much of the impetus for this came from expressions of disquiet by provincial

ministers who were feeling uncomfortable with the ways in which the various systems had evolved throughout the 60s and 70s. One of the earliest expressions of concern came from the then Minister of Education for Ontario, Thomas Wells, in an address to the Ontario Association for Curriculum Development in 1976 when he said that it was the intention of his government "to take a much firmer grip on what is actually being taught in the elementary and secondary schools of the Province." He went on to justify his position by saying:

> We are now convinced, that in our enthusiasm for curriculum flexibility, we may have gone too far in decentralizing the responsibility for the preparation of courses of study . . . In championing the concept of local autonomy in curriculum development, I believe that we have relinquished to too great a degree the element of central direction and central expectations and standards of student achievement . . . Have we been truly providing teachers with the kind of practical assistance and direction which they need, and which indeed they have been asking for? Or have we left teachers too much on their own to struggle with guidelines that have been too vague, too broad and inadequate in their guidance?[13]

In short order his sentiments were being echoed across Canada. In British Columbia, the Minister of Education, Patrick McGeer, was issuing statements indicating that "the citizens of this Province expect the Government to take a more positive role in defining what should be taught in our schools and in assessing the results of that teaching."[14] In Alberta, the Harder report was guiding the government toward the same sorts of conclusions[15] and in Quebec, the Minister, Jacques-Yvan Morin was claiming that "something has gone wrong with the public school system" and immediately moved toward "providing (teachers) with the simple everyday tools required."[16]

Similar expressions of concern were to be heard at roughly the same time in Britain where the then prime minister, James Callaghan, in what became known as the Ruskin College speech, was inviting his country's educationalists to devise a core curriculum that would be acceptable to both the government and to teachers. He thereby initiated a process of reform that along the way would see the abolition of the School's Council, the emergence of a national curriculum, a new system of nationally sponsored examinations, and the new Education Reform Act of 1988 which has produced the greatest round of reforms in British education since the Butler reforms of 1944.

In the United States the ball started rolling slowly with low-keyed questioning about what it is that all students should learn and gained what would appear to be an inexorable momentum with the publication of **A Nation at Risk** in 1983; a momentum that has been sustained through the publication of literally dozens of reports in the same vein as well as commentaries such as Ravitch's **The Schools We Deserve**, Hirsch's **Cultural Literacy**, and Allan Bloom's **The Closing of the American Mind**, all of which have achieved considerable popular currency. In many states this has resulted in new state-developed curricula often coupled with a 'coordinated instructional delivery system', new accreditation standards, requirements for local district and school planning, expanded state-wide student testing programs together with requirements for the use of student test data, to name a few.[17]

What had been a fairly low-keyed Canadian search for

consensus at the end of the 70s was fuelled by the particular distress of our American neighbours and led us to following in their footsteps thereby making many aspects of our system increasingly complex, legalized and bureaucratized. In commenting upon such steps in the United States, the Carnegie Forum (1986) points out that these are measures which stifle innovation and undermine local leadership leading to a situation in which "everyone has the brakes but no one has the motors".[18] But then, if we are out of gas it doesn't really matter.

What is interesting about events in the U.S. since 1986 is what is being referred to as "the Second Wave of Reform". Here we see the focus on teachers. Since 1986 there has been more consideration given to steps that will result in "the greater regulation of teachers -- ensuring their competence through more rigorous preparation, certification and selection -- in exchange for the deregulation of teaching -- fewer rules prescribing what is to be taught, when and how"[19] Sadly, an idea of some potential in the U. S. may be doomed to failure since it assumes a competent and professional teaching force which in the face of ever worsening teacher shortages it may be impossible to either achieve or maintain. In Canada, fortunately, conditions may be sufficiently different so as to allow us to be somewhat more optimistic.

The Educational Demographics. For most of the past twenty years in Canada we have lived with what has been generally

thought of as an excess supply of teachers. Certainly, not all newly qualified graduates have been able to find positions and, indeed, there are many examples of teachers with several years of seniority finding their positions in jeopardy or even terminated because of declining school enrolment. If there has been any up side to the situation at all it has been found in the quality of the young people and some not so young choosing to opt to seek a career in teaching. The graduates of the past ten years as well as those in the universities today are without question superior to every previous generation of teachers the country has ever known -- ability, background, previous experience, commitment, knowledge, talent, intellect. On every measure except teaching experience they outstrip their counterparts pursuing master's degrees. David Pratt at Queen's University says of teacher education candidates at his institution

> if I had to draw a composite portrait of these applicants, it would be of a 22 or 23 year old woman or man with a good undergraduate degree, who has held leadership positions in high school and university, who has travelled widely, who has worked part-time in a variety of interesting jobs, who has considerable experience as a teacher's aide or volunteer in some helping capacity, who has developed talents in at least one area of the arts or athletics, and who has wanted to be a teacher for several years.[20]

The description, I believe, holds well for most teacher education institutions across the country. Quite simply, the popular image of the education student as one not admissible to other programs is erroneous. At the University of New Brunswick, for example, every single student admitted to the post-graduate B.Ed. would be equally admissible to a master's program is his or

her own academic discipline. Indeed, several already possess the master's degree, and the odd one the Ph.D. The high school graduates admitted to the four year undergraduate B.Ed. have high school records which rank them fourth among the University's ten degree programs.

Still, their impact upon the system has been minimal. Many of them have not found their way into the teaching profession, turning often and with success to other career avenues when confronted with a lack of opportunity in their chosen profession. Those who have joined the system are still very much in the minority and are still its junior members. Together with the graduates of the next few years they could begin to have a significant positive impact providing that they are not swamped by a rising tide of mediocrity which is an imminent possibility and is a theme to which I shall return.

Even a casual perusal of newspapers over the past two or three years conveys the sense that something is afoot with respect to the demand for new teachers. In British newspapers one can read of schools that have failed to open because there are no teachers for them; of widespread recruiting in Europe and the commonwealth; of government sponsored emergency measure training, of local education authorities willing to offer "signing bonuses", mortgage assistance, and the payment of removal expenses. In the United States there is a current fascination with making teaching more attractive. Why? In order to recruit more and better candidates in the face of a major

teacher shortage. A best case scenario for the State of California this year is that it will have a shortfall of 21,000 teachers. The worst case scenario puts the figure at 35,000.[21] In the State of Maryland in 1981, its teacher education institutions were producing 122% of the needed supply of teachers. In 1989 it was 78% and by 1993 it is projected to be 63%. The shortages were first evident in the areas of math, science, second language and special education, as indeed they are for us, and in 1986 the Rand Corporation projected that "a general teacher shortage is imminent". Indeed, by 1986 thirty one states were offering incentives of one kind or another in order to attract teachers in the areas just mentioned. There are loan programs, tuition payment schemes, special stipends and when these fail to do the job, there is considerable misassignment of teachers to areas they are unqualified to teach, emergency training, and foreign recruitment.[22] The problem in the U.S. is compounded by the fact that many of their new recruits to teaching are less academically qualified than those who are leaving and many of the most academically able recruits to teaching leave the profession within a very short time. Furthermore, it appears that academically able women and minorities are now choosing other occupations. (Some of this must provide a sense of deja-vu for those of you who were hiring teachers in the 50s and 60s.)

In Canada we have incipient signs of problems of similar dimensions. As far as I am aware, there has been only one large

scale study of the problem: that completed by Laverne Smith for the Province of Ontario in 1989[23], though the Canadian Teachers Federation has developed projections of teacher supply and demand for the whole country. There are some other less comprehensive studies in other provinces and I understand that a Halifax based group is engaged in work for the Council of Maritime Premiers. Based on the data so far available, there can be no doubt that we will shortly confront a problem similar to, though not the same as, our American neighbours. It has already arrived in Ontario and most of the rest of the country will experience it as the 90s proceed.

Quite simply, if we consider the future based on (i) projections of growth in the school age population; (ii) projected rates of teacher retirement, and (iii) current teacher-pupil ratios, then we are in for a crisis of teacher supply. Canadian Teacher's Federation projections for Ontario indicate the need for an additional one thousand elementary teachers per year for the next ten to twelve years and an additional 500 secondary school teachers commencing in about five years and continuing for a further five. These are additions to current levels without taking into account an extremely high projected rate of retirement, to say nothing of the recommendations that have been made for the introduction of junior and senior kindergarten into the public system.

Smith's report shows that there are already serious problems in Ontario, particularly as concerns teachers of math,

science, technology, French and special education. The problem is further compounded by problems relating to immigration, migration within Ontario and housing markets and there is extreme competition among school boards. One school district administrator, reported in Smith's study, has described it by saying "not only are we growing wildly, we are leaking badly". We are beginning to see the first signs of leakage in the Maritimes as Ontario Boards start to recruit from our schools and our Faculties of Education. The pool of supply teachers has been virtually depleted as they are absorbed into the system and even now there is a virtual reliance upon unqualified personnel to fulfil the supply teaching function.

Up until now it has been assumed that the growth in enrolment in Ontario and the increasing rate of teacher retirements could be accommodated by new teachers from three sources:

(1) the lost generation of teachers (these are the teachers who graduated during the past ten or 15 years but who did not find their way into the teaching force.

(2) programs of emergency training for university graduates

(3) a supply, if need be an increased supply, of new teachers from the faculties of education.

Within the context of her major study, Smith conducted a micro study of the "lost generation". What she did was to examine one thousand applicants for recently available positions.

She did discover that approximately 20% of them were neither current year graduates nor teachers currently holding positions; however, nearly all of the 20% had graduated within the previous three years. What he also found was that there were indeed qualified teachers living within the shortage areas but that they had nearly all settled into other careers and were not to be readily deflected from them. A small study to be sure but one that seems to suggest that it would be a risky business indeed to assume that there is a significant pool of potential teachers to be found among the "lost generation".

Emergency training does seem to offer some possibilities though the experience in the U.S. and the U.K. would seem to indicate that it cannot be relied upon to provide large numbers, especially in areas where there are attractive alternatives for university graduates. Whether emergency measures constitute a desirable strategy at all is another matter.

So this takes us to the third option, increasing the supply from the training institutions. The Ontario Deans of Education have indicated to the government that their faculties are currently operating at full capacity but that they could expand providing that there were concomitant resources made available. They point out that in recent years their institutions have been accepting only about one third of the qualified candidates and that there is, therefore, a pool of potential candidates available. They believe that they can increase the numbers of graduates without diminishing the standards of admission or the

program requirements.[24] The fact that half of the faculty members in those faculties are scheduled to retire between now and 1995 seems not to pose a problem in their eyes.

Options

As we face the impending teacher shortage, it seems to me that the popular option for addressing the problem will be to look to the teacher education institutions to turn up the supply whether through the regular programs or through emergency ones. There is no doubt all but that this could be done. Whether it should be is another matter entirely. The result, in my view, would be an unmitigated disaster which would succeed in washing out in very short order those gains and improvements that the profession has worked hard to achieve over the past twenty years and which, in many instances are not yet fully realized. In order to explain why this will be the case I need to digress for a few moments in order to describe what might be called "the bargain"

The Bargain[25]

I want to talk here mostly about secondary schools, junior and senior high schools, since that is what I know best though what I have to say also applies to elementary schools and to universities. Let me start with a proposition that is well substantiated in the literature and that is that teachers depend upon their students for much of their sense of success,

accomplishment and satisfaction. Most adolescents, however, do not derive their sense of success, accomplishment and satisfaction from serious academic learning. In fact, adolescents are preoccupied with life events and opportunities that have little to do with serious learning. Indeed, while the teacher may have a sense of student success having something to do with academic work, for the vast majority of students, success has to do with social status and their effort and commitment are directed much more toward the achieving of that social status than toward any sort of academic achievement. The focus for boys is very often upon sports, for girls upon extracurricular clubs and societies, for both upon friendships and, more recently, upon part-time employment. One of the most troubling themes then in the literature of the 80s is the observation that there is " the tendency of students from all the social classes, children attending even the "better" achievement oriented high schools, to be uniformly uninvolved in the acquisition of challenging academic knowledge and yet we know that their achievement (I wonder do we mean success?) depends upon their engagement in and commitment to, rigorous academic work. This engagement and commitment is shaped by a number of factors such as the students' own prior experience; options that compete for their time and effort; their assessment of the pay-off; parental pressure; and the influence of their teachers.[26]

For various combinations of reasons, students very often come to secondary school without any particular inclination

toward learning the material that professional educators believe is worth knowing. Because of this they begin to use a power of veto in order to subvert the teacher's intention. "How long does the answer have to be?" asks a student about to take an examination. The test instructions ask for twenty-five lines. "Will twenty lines be ok?" It turns out that twenty will do.This is the beginning of the process of bargaining that encourages teachers to "lower expectations and adjust their instruction in order to better manage students." It is a process well recognized in almost all social relationships. "The satisfaction that accompanies the successful management of social relations in a classroom can delude teachers into believing that are meeting their responsibilities . . ." In a recent book called **Selling Students Short**, from which the illustrations above are drawn, Michael Sedlak and his colleagues document the nature of classroom bargaining drawing upon a host of studies completed in the last twenty years. They show quite clearly that the authority of even those teachers who are strongly committed to academic learning can be undermined . . . ultimately causing teachers to emphasize social relations in order to make everyone's life more bearable.

> Preoccupation with personal relations in a classroom can impede academic endeavors in many ways. In order to maintain harmonious relationships, for example, some teachers negotiate with their students about a variety of issues that might promote or inhibit learning. One investigator (Wegmann, 1974) who observed and recorded more than 100 hours of such interaction and negotiation has described the process in detail. Working from his field notes and transcriptions of classroom dialogue, he has reconstructed the negotiation of assignments, examination

> content coverage, and even the "correctness" of individual objective test question responses in a dozen 'academic' classes. He describes the interaction as a 'process of mutually defining or managing academic reality'[27]

in every case, he points out, "students sought to minimize requirements, delay or postpone assignments, and receive the highest grades they could for the least amount of effort".

It would appear, then, that a bargain is struck; and it is one that often demands little academically of either teachers or students. When set at a low level, the bargain's essential features include: relatively little concern for academic content; diversion from the specified knowledge to be taught; the substitution of genial banter and conversation for concentrated academic exercises; improvisational instruction; and the negotiation of content, assignments and standards.

Do you know this classroom? As told by a student:

> One day he started on railroad mileage. Another teacher walked in: "Hey, I fixed your TV." "Oh, excuse me," said Mr. P. and walked out. Twenty minutes later he returned and he told us that he wanted to talk about the increase in railroad mileage between 1830 and 1940, and while he was reading the graph from the book not one student was paying a bit of attention . . . Some had their books open but did not look at them. Others just sat and stared or talked to their friends. This apparently didn't bother Mr. P. No individual was getting singularly disruptive so he just went on until even he become bored and concluded quickly that although "America has a lot of problems it is still the best country in the world."[28]

But the bargain is not always set low. There are enviably successful classrooms, effective teachers and deeply engaged, accomplished students. "The best teachers find ways of engaging their students in meaningful and worthwhile learning . . . They

resolve the universal tension between their dependence upon students for occupational satisfaction and their professional responsibility to maximize the learning of even defiant students . . . This is what makes them the best teachers". The poor teachers resolve the tension "by accommodating their expectations and instruction to indifferent, disengaged, or defiant students. Such teachers cope with the tension by deferring to students . . . They concentrate upon good social relations in the classrooms at the expense of academic learning".[29]

What does all of this have to do with the selection and education of the teaching force? Quite simply, it is abundantly clear that inferior teachers -- those who are not confident in their subject matter, who have a limited repertoire of teaching, who show no sense of artistry, who see no relationship between what they do and the future well-being of their students, who have no calling, who do not see that what is in the interest of their students may not always be immediately interesting, who are themselves poorly educated -- will strike a bargain that will entice them away from dealing with anything of moment in their classrooms, will trivialize the educational experiences of their students and allow students to say with justification that school is boring. We have to realize that it is not a question of a bargain or no bargain. All social situations are negotiated. We need to make sure that the negotiating team knows what a good deal looks like.

Why will expanding the teacher supply result in a poor bargain?

The reason is that it will flood the market with inferior teachers.

Over the past 15 years or so Faculties of Education in Canada have been able to point to the high quality of the students that are admitted and graduated. Very often we derive particular satisfaction from pointing out that, indeed, we admit to teacher education only a portion of those who are qualified. This, ofcourse, does point to the fact that there is a pool of potential applicants who are minimally qualified to pursue teacher education and who are not admitted at the present time. However, if we accept that the admission process is neither arbitrary nor random then we must conclude that those who are now admitted must have more of whatever it is we think is important for admission and that those who are refused admission must have less of it. If we begin to admit large numbers of candidates who are now denied admission we must be, by any definition, admitting "inferior" students. This will have an immediate impact upon the nature of classroom bargaining as it now takes place in the Faculties. Since there is social contract which implies that only a small proportion of students admitted to programs will fail them, then it is very unlikely that the new students can be held to the standards negotiated by their predecessors. Furthermore, there is simply no point in saying that they should be required to meet the same standard or fail. They will not be capable of meeting the standard and if they are failed we will

not be meeting the increased teacher demand which was the reason for admitting them in the first place. Let it be very clear, then, that they will successfully negotiate a new understanding of what it means to be successful as an education student, and subsequently what it means to be a teacher.

When they graduate and enter upon their new careers, as they surely will because of the availability of positions, they will themselves be less well educated than recent graduates. They will be less capable on virtually every dimension that matters and they will be extremely vulnerable to the bargaining power of their students. They will negotiate a low bargain. That would be bad enough in itself if their bargain were restricted to their own classes; but the bargains they make will strengthen the hand of the disengaged and uncommitted students as they negotiate with other teachers who would set their sights somewhat higher; they will bring their limited vision and lack of perception to department and whole staff meetings, and because of their numbers their sense of what schools should be will prevail. There will unquestionably be a rising tide of mediocrity and we shall have to wait for the next era of teacher oversupply before we can even hope to have another crack at righting the wrong.

Is there an alternative?

But what else can we do is the question. If we do not expand the supply of teachers to meet the impending demand the teacher-student ratio will soar and it will be totally impossible

to run schools as we do today. That is precisely correct. There is no doubt that we would have to restructure the way we do our business. We would certainly have to ask ourselves what it is that is so sacrosanct about particular teacher-student ratios, about the subjects we teach and the way we organize them, the form of the school time-table and the length of the school day and the school year, and above all the role of being a teacher. But why shouldn't we ask these questions. After all, the reason these things are the way they are today is mostly because of inertia. Simply, that is the way they were yesterday and when each of us is initiated into teaching they form part of the that world that we take for granted without asking too many questions.

Let's imagine that we were to maintain the current rates of supply, that we do not turn up the supply even in face of a possible growing school age population and a retirement rate that would make it impossible for us to maintain the current system. The upside of the equation would be that we would have the best teaching force that has ever been known and those teachers should become the key players in shaping the schools of the future. Imagine the following scenario: You are currently the principal of a school of approximately 500 students and 30 teachers. At the end of this year five of your teachers are going to retire. Because of a teacher shortage you are having a difficult time finding replacements but you do have five prospects all of whom just managed to scrape through their B.Ed. programs with what looks like a social promotion in student teaching. You are

saying to yourself, "What else can I do?" Then along comes your superintendent with an offer. You can hire them, if you want he says, but if you like, I'll give you the equivalent of their salaries and benefits for you and your staff to spend as you see fit if you want to try and get along without replacements. So you work out the details and you call a meeting of the staff and you put it to them. "We are going to lose five teachers and you have all met the new graduates that we could hire to replace them. If we choose not to replace them we can have $165,000 per year in order to support, in whatever ways we like, the additional student-teacher ratio that we would have to carry. What do you think that we ought to do?" My sense is that a truly professional staff, a staff with a sense of adventure and a principal with a faith in their talent, would say "let's take the money and see what we can do!" Well, what can they do?

Perhaps first they can remind themselves of what it is about them that propels them toward this new endeavour. The fact that they made the choice suggests to me that they already possess many of the attributes necessary to make schools places where children will succeed. As a staff they may already share many of the characteristics that **A Profile of Outstanding Public Elementary Schools**[30] turned up in 1986. They are likely concerned not just with academic knowledge and competence but also with character. They bargain high, set high expectations, monitor standards and reward results. They cherish a professional work environment where colleagues and students are

treated with respect and dignity. They jealously guard instructional time and maximize the use of the resources that they have available. They prize close collaboration with their communities concerning all aspects of their schools work. They have a sense of vision and direction for their school which is shared, promoted and nurtured by their principal teacher. These attributes constitute the foundation upon which they can build. But where and how?

I wonder is there anything at all for us in the brave new world of technology? In a historical look at Technology and the Classroom[31], David Tyack of Stanford University and his colleague, Elisabeth Hansot talk about "futures that never happened". Hear the hype of another time, they say. "The inventor . . . of the system deserves to be ranked among the best contributors to learning and science, if not among the greatest benefactors of mankind." The time was 1841 and the system was the blackboard. And they believe that there was much the same for radio, film and television, language laboratories and programmed learning, as there is now for the computer. "Too often, inflated promises have been followed by a burst of enthusiasm and partial implementation, and the by discouragement and disrepair, broken morale and broken machines". It is certainly a perspective with which teachers can identify. But then perhaps we have too often looked to the new technology for the quick fix, something to by-pass teachers making the system teacher-proof, something to replace and supplant teachers rather

than seeing them as tools that enable the craftsman to better ply his trade.

Today, across the country, there were literally hundreds of classrooms in which teachers separately and independently introduced their students into the mysteries of the causes of the fall of Rome or the significance of the Reformation, the structure of DNA or Newton's Laws of Motion, to quadratic equations and Paradise Lost. It is safe to say that the quality of the instruction was, at best, uneven. There are ways in which we could assure that the quality of the presentation would not be uneven. And not only that -- we could assure that they would be uniformly of high quality and would guarantee high degrees of engagement among students. Is it possible, for example, to imagine social studies courses built around good television such as Pierre Berton's The Last Spike, Alistair Cooke's America, Romer's Egypt, Kenneth Clark's Civilization; or science courses that look to Carl Sagan's Cosmos, Bronowski's The Ascent of Man, or David Suzuki's The Nature of Things; a language course built around Robert McNeil's The Story of English. Can we consider for our students direct access to Jacques Cousteau, Lewis Leakey or Dian Fossey. Ofcourse we can! Can you imagine a current events course built around As It Happens? Why not? From the radio, can you imagine the mellifluous voice announcing "Good afternoon students. I'm Lister Sinclair and this is Ideas." The hardwares now have potential because there is now something worth playing. The story of Sesame Street and the Children's

Television Workshop illustrates vividly that it can be done. Not for the purpose of replacing teachers but in order to support and enhance the teacher's work. Relieved of the burden of trying to "cover the material" the teacher can move to the tasks where he or she can truly make a difference: in the building of meaning through discussing and debating, coaching and criticising, monitoring and supervising, providing feedback and offering guidance. And we might also wish to think about how often we might engage in these activities?

I am sure that we are all familiar with schools in which pride is taken in the fact that all students are directly under the supervision of a teacher for every hour of the school day. I can see no virtue in this in those circumstances where students and teachers would conspire to avoid sustained, rigorous and significant work. I have no doubt at all that we could reduce by 50% the amount of so-called student- teacher contact time and still enhance the quality of learning. You have all watched deeply engaged and committed students pursue in school and at home their own independent studies. You know that what they require from their teachers is some direction, encouragement and criticism, not minute by minute supervision. We need to create the time for teachers to think about how to make maximal use of the resources available, to talk individually and in small groups with students, to carefully review and examine the work that they produce.

But what about those students who are not engaged and not committed. Those that will drop out completely or become part of the schools corps of psychological dropouts. Such steps are even more important for them.

During the past few months I have had the opportunity to be with classes of so-called disengaged students as they have watched **Gorillas in the Mist** and a CBC telecast on the future of the world's rainforests. The disengaged became engaged, the uncommitted became committed, and not just for the short duration of the video presentation but also in the subsequent discussions, the reading and the writing through which a sensitive teacher was contributing to the making of meaning about things that matter.

The key, ofcourse, was the teacher. There was no menial bargain here. A bargain there was, to be sure, but one worth making.

Certainly I have no shake and bake formula that would allow us to restructure schooling instantly, but there are unquestionably ways in which we could begin to think about the task. What I am certain of is that the emerging profession is capable of attending to the task with vision and creativity. What is equally clear to me is that we must not expend our energies over the next generation trying to maintain a status quo whose whole philosophy seems to be captured in the idea of a particular student teacher ratio. And certainly we must not allow the emerging profession that seems to have such great potential to be swallowed up in a tidal wave of inferiority where

excellence will yield to mediocrity, enthusiasm to indifference, skill to ineptitude, artistry to sloveniiness, caring to apathy, and high expectations to cynicism. To do so, we need to recognize the teacher as the key and grant that teachers make a difference; but we also need to be aware that they do not all make the same difference; that some may indeed make no difference; and that the difference that some make may be worse than no difference at all. We need to take care that the positive contributions of the good ones is not totally expunged by the negative contributions of the bad ones. Our profession must not be a refuge for the ordinary.

REFERENCES

1. Radwanski, G. **Ontario Study of the Relevance of Education, and the Issue of Dropouts.** Toronto: Ministry of Education, 1988. (microlog 88-05376)

2. Hall, E.M. & Dennis, L.A. **Living and Learning: The Report of the Provincial Committee on Aims and Objectives of Education in the Schools of Ontario.** Toronto: Ontario Department of Education, 1968.

3. Worth, W.H. **A Choice of Futures.** (The Report of the Commission on Educational Planning) Edmonton: The Cabinet Committee on Education, 1972.

4. Flanagan, J. (Ed.) **Perspectives on Improving Education: Project Talent's Young Adults Look Back.** New York: Praeger, 1978, p.35.

5. Garbarino, J., & Asp, C. E. **Successful Schools and Competent Students.** Toronto: D. C. Heath, 1981, p.7.

6. Radwanski, G. pp. 1 & 5.

7. Radwanski, G. p. 15.

8. Radwanski, G. p. 11.

9. Economic Council of Canada. **Making Technology Work: Innovation and Jobs in Canada.** Ottawa: author, 1987. p.31.

10. Dobell, E.R. as quoted in Radwanski, p. 31.

11. Radwanski, pp. 21-22.

12. Hughes, A.S. Curriculum 1980: the Centralization of Authority.In J.J. Bernier and G.S. Tomkins (Eds.). **Curriculum Canada II.** Vancouver: University of British Columbia, Centre for the Study of Curriculum and Instruction, 1980.

13. Well, T.L. **Major Change in Curriculum Development.** An address to the meeting of the Ontario Association for Curriculum Development. November, 1976. p.1.

14. Ministry of Education, British Columbia. **What should our children be learning? Goals of the Core Curriculum.** Victoria, 1976.

15. Alberta Education. **Alberta Education and Diploma Requirements.** (The Harder Report). Edmonton: author, 1977.

16. Ministere de l'Education, P.Q. **Primary and Secondary Education in Quebec (Green Paper).** Quebec: author, 1977.

17. Darling-Hammond L. & Berry, B. **The Evolution of Teacher Policy.** Washington: the RAND corporation, 1988, p.2.

18. Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy. **A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21st Century.** New York: author, 1986.

19. Darling-Hammond, p.5.

20. Pratt, D. Past Achievements and Future Pospects for Curriculum in Canada. **Education New Brunswick-Journal Edition.** Volume 3, June, 1988, p.4-8.

21. Maryland State Department of Education. **Teacher Supply and Demand in Maryland (1986-1989).** Baltimore: author, 1986.

22. Beal, J.L. **et al. A Review of Incentive Programs for Mathematics and Science Teachers in the Fifty States and the District of Columbia, 1983-1984.** (ED 272373)

23. Smith, L. **Perspectives on Teacher Supply and Demand in Ontario, 1988-2008.** Toronto: OISE, 1989.

24. As quoted in Smith, p.32.

25. This section of the paper draws heavily on the conceptions of Sedlak, M.W., Wheeler., C. W., Pullin, D.C., & Cusick, P.A. **Selling Students Short: Classroom Bargains and Academic Reform in the American High School.** New York: Teacher's College Press, 1986.

26. For a review of this research see **Sedlak**, pp.100 - 102.

27. Sedlak, p.101.

28. Sedlak, p.7.

29. Sedlak, pp. 101 -102.

30. Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education. **Places Where Children Succeed: A Profile of Outstanding Public Elementary Schools.** Washington: author, 1986.

31. Tyack, D., & Hansot, E. Futures that never happened: Technology and the Classroom. **Education Week**, September 4, 1985, pp. 40 and 35.